

Creating Annotated Bibliographies in APA

What is an annotated bibliography?

“An *annotated bibliography* is a type of student paper in which reference list entries are followed by short descriptions of the work called *annotations*” (9.51, p. 307).

Types of annotations:

- **Summary annotation:** Summary annotations focus on describing the source, such as the author’s qualifications and why the source was created. They describe the main ideas, arguments, themes, and methodology, and identify the intended audience. Summary annotations explain the author’s expertise, point of view, and any bias he or she may have about the topic.
- **Evaluative annotation:** Evaluative annotations include both a short description and an evaluation of the cited source. In an evaluative annotation, the source is critically assessed for accuracy, relevance, and quality. It is compared to other sources on the same topic that have also been cited to show similarities and differences. An explanation is provided as to why each source is useful for the research topic and how it relates. Evaluative annotations evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the source and identify the observations or conclusions of the author.

Formatting annotated bibliographies (9.51, p. 307):

- Apply general APA Style guidelines on formatting (margins, font, line spacing, and references).
- Order references in alphabetical order.
- Each annotation is placed below its reference entry in a new paragraph. Indent the entire annotation .5” from the left margin (as you would a block quotation). Do not indent the first line of the annotation. If the annotation spans multiple paragraphs, indent the first line of subsequent paragraphs .5”.
- Double space the entire annotated bibliography.
- Your instructor will set all other requirements such as number of references to include and the length and focus of each annotation.

A sample evaluative annotated bibliography follows. *The examples are drawn from the APA manual (7th ed.) and Purdue’s Online Writing Lab and formatted according to APA requirements.*

Full Title of Paper: Annotated Bibliography

Carlson, D. S., Thompson, M. J., & Kacmar, K. M. (2009). Double crossed: The spillover and crossover effects of work demands on work outcomes through the family. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 104(2), 214-228. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ap0000348>

Carlson et al. (2009) conducted an empirical study to examine the multiple paths through which work and family variables can affect work outcomes. Carlson et al. viewed work demands as raising family stress, with potential negative consequences on work performance. Results supported a model in which direct effects of work demands and spillover effects of work demands to work-to-family conflict, spousal stress transmission, and later family-to-work conflict on organizational citizenship and absenteeism. Overall, the study demonstrated a link from work demands to work outcomes when considering the family, but those paths differed depending on whether attitudinal or behavioral work outcomes were examined.

Ehrenreich, B. (2001). *Nickel and dimed: On (not) getting by in America*. Henry Holt and Company.

In this book of nonfiction based on the journalist's experiential research, Ehrenreich attempts to ascertain whether it is currently possible for an individual to live on a minimum wage in America. Taking jobs as a waitress, a maid in a cleaning service, and a Walmart sales employee, the author summarizes and reflects on her work, her relationships with fellow workers, and her financial struggles in each situation.

An experienced journalist, Ehrenreich is aware of the limitations of her experiment and the ethical implications of her experiential research tactics and reflects on these issues in the text. The author is forthcoming about her methods and supplements her experiences with scholarly research on her places of employment, the economy, and the rising cost of living in America. Ehrenreich's project is timely, descriptive, and well-researched.

Note: While both examples summarize and evaluate the books, neither annotation reflects on the potential importance or usefulness of the sources for this person's own research.